

01  
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second conductive type formed in spaced-apart relation in a surface of the semiconductor substrate, and a depletion layer formed in the semiconductor substrate by application of a reverse bias to the photodiode so as to surround the semiconductor layers, the depletion layer having an etched surface portion disposed between the semiconductor layers so that an interface level region of the surface of the semiconductor substrate does not exist between the semiconductor layers.

Kindly add the following new claims 15-16:

02

15. A photodiode comprising: an optical detection portion for detecting an optical signal and outputting a photoelectric conversion signal, the optical detection portion having a semiconductor substrate of a first conductive type and a plurality of semiconductor layers of a second conductive type disposed in spaced-apart relation in a surface of the semiconductor substrate so that an interface level region of the surface of the semiconductor substrate does not exist between the semiconductor layers.

16. A photodiode according to claim 15; wherein the first conductive type is different from the second conductive type.